

Oral Questions

the economy in the last quarter, and that Statistics Canada figures released just a couple of days ago pointed out that the Minister's forecast of an improvement for the last quarter has turned out to be wrong? Instead of things getting better, they are getting worse. I repeat that we have lost more than 100,000 jobs in the last two months alone.

Considering that about a third of these people unemployed are heads of families, where entire families are dependent on the income of those people who are not working, will the Minister now come to his senses, admit his forecast was wrong, admit the need for a new program, and bring it in?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I invite the Hon. Member to go back to my text and read it again, because he seems to have completely misread or forgotten it. It was forecast that there would be an end to the downturn in the fourth quarter. The figures for the fourth quarter are not out, Mr. Leader of the New Democratic Party.

Mr. Broadbent: Look at the StatsCan figures.

Mr. Lalonde: The StatsCan figures refer to the third quarter. I invite the Hon. Member to look at those figures and find out. The figures for the fourth quarter will become available only in the first days of February, and I invite my hon. friend to have the intellectual honesty to recognize the situation and the facts as they are.

As far as the unemployment situation is concerned, I indicated that we expected unemployment to remain high over the next several months. As the Hon. Member knows, every winter in this country the actual number of unemployed increases. What is also very important to know and follow, however, is the seasonally adjusted rate. That rate has remained stable over the past two months. I would hope we will see a gradual decline in that rate, but I cannot promise the Hon. Member it will actually occur.

These are forecasts. Our policies are going to come into effect and I hope they will create an environment where we will see a gradual decline in the unemployment level over the next year. This is our purpose, and indeed we are going to do everything we can to achieve that purpose.

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, the Minister not only is doing nothing about the problem, he does not listen to the question. The figures I referred to from Statistics Canada were released earlier this week. They have nothing to do with the third quarter figures which came out this morning. They are indicators that StatsCan produced which show that, instead of getting an improvement in the last quarter, as the Minister said we would in his address in October, we are going to get the opposite. I tell the Minister to go back and check. However, I am not interested in scoring little debating points here in the House; I would like some action.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST THAT INCOME TAX BE INCREASED FOR UPPER INCOME GROUPS

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, in October I put a proposal to the Minister which would obtain lots of money to create jobs by reimposing on upper income Canadians the taxes he took off them a year ago. The Minister then said he would study the proposal. A couple of days ago, in the House, the Prime Minister said he would study the proposal. I ask the Minister if the Government of Canada will stop studying this proposal, act upon it, and produce the jobs that Canadians want.

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, in my previous statement I made a mistake. I mentioned that the fourth quarter figures would come out in the first few days of February. I believe they will come out in the first few days of March.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lalonde: Then we will know what has happened in the economy in the last quarter of 1982—

Mr. Deans: That is not the only mistake you made.

Mr. Lalonde:—and then we will be able to argue about the actual situation.

As far as the proposal of the Hon. Member is concerned, I indicated that I was considering it in the context of my next budget.

Mr. Broadbent: Do it now.

Mr. Lalonde: I will examine this, indeed. I remind him that we have already allocated \$1.1 billion of additional expenditures to create jobs in this country right now, and I remind him that I am going to introduce an Income Tax amendment in the House next week. I would hope we will have his support to pass that as soon as possible so that we will create, in the private sector, the certainty required for them to make investment decisions and also encourage the private sector to support recovery in this country.

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NATIONAL SECURITY

CASE OF CANADIAN PROFESSOR—DISCLOSURE OF NATO SECRETS

Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of National Defence I direct my question to the Acting Prime Minister, concerning the Hambleton case. It is well known that among NATO nations Canada is recognized as a major player in the area of NATO security and intelligence. With this in mind, how can the Canadian Government take the position that a Canadian divulging NATO secrets is not detrimental to Canada's own security?